



Brian Calhoun
Councilmember
District 2



Greater Fresno Metropolitan Government

Combine the City of Fresno and Fresno County into a single government with an executive and legislative body, keeping all other cities, police/fire protection districts and special districts in existence.

The City of Fresno and Fresno County will not be dissolved. Fresno County and City governments will be combined into Greater Fresno. While other Fresno County cities will be part of the merged government, **the merger does not alter small city powers or services**. These smaller cities may, if they wish, assess taxes to provide extra services within their boundaries.

The Greater Fresno legislative body would have 13 districts, with a total constituency population of 799,000. The representation ratio would be one elected representative per 61,000 persons.

All persons within Fresno County will vote for a single representative to represent their district and for the executive of the reorganized Greater Fresno metropolitan government.

Consolidated city- county governments in the United States is not uncommon.

<u>Year Consolidated Governments</u>	<u>State</u>
1805 New Orleans-Orleans Parish	Louisiana
1822 Boston-Suffolk County	Massachusetts
1854 Philadelphia-Philadelphia County	Pennsylvania
1856 San Francisco-San Francisco County	California
1898 New York-New York County	New York
1904 Denver-Denver County	Colorado
1907 Honolulu-Honolulu County	Hawaii
1949 Baton Rouge-East Baton Rouge Parish	Louisiana
1952 Hampton & Phoebus-Elizabeth County	Virginia
1957 Miami-Dade County	Florida
1957 Newport News-Warwick County	Virginia
1962 Nashville-Davidson County	Tennessee
1962 South Norfolk-Norfolk County	Virginia
1962 Virginia Beach-Princess Anne County	Virginia
1967 Jacksonville-Duval County	Florida
1969 Juneau-Greater Juneau Borough	Alaska

1969	Carson City-Ormsby County	Nevada
1970	Indianapolis-Marion County	Indiana
1970	Columbus-Muscogee County	Georgia
1971	Sitka-Greater Sitka Borough	Alaska
1972	Lexington-Fayette County	Kentucky
1972	Suffolk-Nansemond County	Virginia
1975	Anchorage-Anchorage Area Borough	Alaska
1976	Anaconda- Dear Lodge County	Montana
1976	Butte-Silver Bow County	Montana
1981	Houma-Terrebonne Parish	Louisiana
1982	Battlecreek-Calhoun county	Michigan
1984	Staunton-Augusta County	Virginia
1987	Brunswick-Glynn county	Georgia
1987	Lynchburg-Moore County	Tennessee
1987	Emporia-Greenville County	Virginia
1989	Conyers-Rockdale County	Georgia
1990	Athens-Clarke County	Georgia
2001	Louisville-Jefferson County	Kentucky

General

- Merger has been a success in communities nationwide.
- Consolidation of city and county governments will unite Fresno County assuring one voice and one direction
- Uniting the City of Fresno and Fresno County into Greater Fresno will eliminate duplicative, overlapping government departments and save money.
- A county-wide legislative body and executive will ensure that issues affecting the quality of life, such as traffic and growth, will get the attention they deserve.
- Every area of Fresno County will have an equal voice in local and county-wide decisions.
- Greater Fresno will be a stronger, more vibrant city – one of the top 25 cities in the nation. Merger would make Fresno the country's 12th largest city instead of today's rank of 37. Fresno will be in the same category with cities like Boston, San Francisco and Seattle.

Taxes and costs

- Following approval of the merger by the voters in a referendum, the new legislative body and executive will have five years to resolve differences between current city and county laws – plenty of time for careful consideration with public input.

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- There are potential savings from combining duplicative, overlapping services provided by the city and county.
- The cost of government will not increase, and services will not decrease since the new government must operate within the same tax structure that now exists unless changed by the legislative body and executive.
- State laws will continue to require voter approval for tax increases above certain levels. Politicians in Sacramento will not dictate the details.
- With one unified government overseeing operations, it's likely that many departments will be combined, ending duplication and saving taxpayers money.

Police and Fire Services

Since police and fire protection are two of the most important services local government provides, police and fire services will not change. The proposal does not require the merger of the police departments – or of any departments. This framework allows time for the unified government to carefully oversee combining departments if that is desired by the community and its elected representatives.

Economic Development

- Smaller cities will retain the powers they now have regarding planning and zoning.
- With a single local government setting policy, Greater Fresno will be in a better position to attract and retain well-paying jobs.
- Being America's 12th largest city will give Fresno more prestige. Companies, entrepreneurs, and sports teams pay attention to these rankings and use them in making decisions about where to locate.

Collective Bargaining

Collective bargaining rights will be protected. Existing labor contracts will remain in place.

County and City Ordinances

Existing city and county ordinances will be combined into a single set of laws. Any conflicts will be resolved by the new legislative body and executive.

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TRANSITION PROCESS

June, 2002 - Form blue ribbon Fresno Metro Government Commission to consider the possible merger of the City of Fresno and County of Fresno into Greater Fresno.

The Commission should be broadly representative, linked to local government and have strong and active leadership.

The Commission would have as few constraints as possible. The Commission should, however, be charged with one major test or criterion in its final recommendations—that of feasibility. It should be asked to produce a reorganization plan with a reasonable prospect of adoption.

The first substantive task of the Commission would be to engage itself in a process of self education on three major topics: (1) the existing system of local government, (2) previous successful and unsuccessful efforts to reform the local government system, and (3) relevant national and foreign experience with metropolitan and local government reorganization

June, 2003 - Metro Government Commission makes its report.

November, 2004 - General election on Greater Fresno merger referendum.

If Greater Fresno approved

February, 2005 - Establish City of Fresno/Fresno County Reorganization Office.

April, 2005 - Appoint members of Greater Fresno Transition Task Force to develop and implement a plan to prepare the governments of the City of Fresno and Fresno County for merger effective January, 2007.

Develop a plan to ensure that essential services are maintained during the transition period and fully operational upon merger.

- Avoid interruptions in payroll and benefits.
- Maintain human services to in-need citizens.
- Avoid interruptions in public safety coverage.
- Avoid interruptions in revenue collections or payables.
- Ensure citizen know-how to access public services.
- Minimize workplace disruption.

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Identify opportunities for merged operations during the transition period where strong consensus exists in the Greater Fresno Task Force that significant community benefits would result.

- Evaluate cost savings opportunities.
- Identify opportunities for improved efficiencies.
- Focus on areas that will help the new Greater Fresno government hit the ground running.

Make recommendations regarding opportunities to improve government operations for consideration by leaders of the new merged government.

- Focus on areas that will make us worthy of our new position as the 12th largest U. S. city.
- Make suggestions to solve existing problems by tapping into employees' knowledge.

June, 2005 - Proposed boundaries of the 13 legislative districts presented to the public for comment and eventual approval.

November, 2005 - Candidates wishing to run for Greater Fresno executive and representatives of the legislative body register to run for office.

January, 2006 - Filing deadline for all candidates wishing to run for executive and representatives of the legislative body.

January, 2006 - Submission date for all Greater Fresno Transition Task Force recommendations.

April, 2006 - Primary Election for Greater Fresno executive and representatives.

November, 2006 - General Election of Greater Fresno executive and representatives.

January, 2007 - Terms of Office for City of Fresno mayor, councilmembers, and Fresno County supervisors expire. Newly elected Greater Fresno mayor and council take office.

April and November, 2008 - In order to provide staggered four-year terms, Greater Fresno representatives from districts with even numbers will run for full four- year terms.

*Largest Cities in the United States
Before and After Proposed Merger**

	<u>City</u>	<u>Population</u>			<u>City</u>	<u>Population</u>	
1	New York, NY	8,008,278		14	Jacksonville, FL	735,617	
2	Los Angeles, CA	3,694,820		15	Columbus, OH	711,470	
3	Chicago, IL	2,896,016		16	Austin, TX	656,562	
4	Houston, TX	1,953,631		17	Baltimore, MD	651,154	
5	Philadelphia, PA	1,517,550		18	Memphis, TN	650,100	
6	Phoenix, AZ	1,321,045		19	Milwaukee, WI	596,974	
7	San Diego, CA	1,223,400		20	Boston, MA	589,141	
8	Dallas, TX	1,188,580		21	Washington, DC	572,059	
9	San Antonio, TX	1,144,646		22	Nashville-Davidson, TN	569,891	
10	Detroit, MI	951,270		23	El Paso, TX	563,662	
11	San Jose, CA	894,943		24	Seattle, WA	563,374	
12	Indianapolis, IN	791,926		25	Denver, CO	554,636	
13	San Francisco	776,733		37	Fresno, CA	427,652	
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	<u>**After Merger:</u>			13	Indianapolis, IN	791,926	
1	New York, NY	8,008,278		14	San Francisco	776,733	
2	Los Angeles, CA	3,694,820		15	Jacksonville, FL	735,617	
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10	Detroit, MI	951,270		23	Nashville-Davidson, TN	569,891	
11	San Jose, CA	894,943		24	El Paso, TX	563,662	
12	Greater Fresno, CA	799,407		25	Seattle, WA	563,374	

*Based upon 2000 Census

** Based upon proposed city and county merger